



Week 2: IEP Development

Overview

For the next three weeks' assignment, you will work with Joseph, a fictional middle school student enrolled at your school who requires an Individualized Education Program. Over the coming weeks, you will need to develop an IEP, monitor how his program is implemented in the classroom, and use your knowledge of student rights and school management to make sound decisions when he engages in behavior that calls for disciplinary action.

To begin, in this assignment you will develop a remediation for Joseph. To complete the assignment, you must familiarize yourself with both statewide special education policies and those in place at your district and school. The assignment also requires you to use knowledge gained from your lectures and readings and from communication with leaders at your school, including your principal, special education coordinator, and classroom teachers. You are expected to cite the relevant law and/or policy that you use to formulate your answers.

Rubric

Use this rubric to guide your work.

Week 2: IEP Development	Accomplished	Proficient	Needs Improvement	Unacceptable
Identification	Correctly identifies all (4 – 5) members of an ARD committee and their roles in IEP development (3 points)	Identifies some (2 – 3) members of an ARD committee and their roles in IEP development (2 points)	Identifies 1 -2 members of an ARD committee and accurately describe their roles in IEP development (1 point)	Does not identify any members of an ARD committee or describe their roles in IEP development (0 points)
Steps	Details the steps taken to determine special education eligibility (3 points)	Generally outlines the steps taken to determine special education eligibility (2 points)	Vaguely outlines the process of determining special education eligibility (1 point)	Does not outline the process of determining special education eligibility (0 points)
Components	Details 4 – 5 components of a student's IEP, including classroom accommodations and support and assessment accommodations (3 points)	Identifies and explains some (2 – 3) components of a student's IEP (2 points)	Identifies and explains few (1 – 2) components of a student's IEP (1 point)	Does not identify or explain the components of a student's IEP (0 points)
Mechanics (1 point)	No or few errors in grammar, spelling, or punctuation. (1 point)			Responses lack clarity and depth and/or have multiple errors in grammar, spelling, or punctuation. (0 points)

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Directions

Use information from your lectures and readings, as well as information you gathered for your Week 1 Assignment, to walk your staff through meeting process for Joseph, a fictional student, in the workspace below.

A new seventh grade student, Joseph, has enrolled in your school after having qualified for special education in his former school district. His disability falls under the IDEA category known as “emotional disturbance.” While he has always been educated in “regular” classrooms, he is prone to brief, disruptive outbursts in class and has had trouble getting along with his teachers and classmates. He also has difficulty paying attention in class and does not sit still during tests and quizzes, often distracting his classmates while they are also taking their tests.

At the beginning of the school year, an ARD committee convenes and begins the process of evaluating Joseph for special education services.

Workspace

Describe the members of Joseph’s ARD committee and their roles in the development of his IEP.

Joseph’s ARD is attended by Joseph’s parents, who are there to ensure their son receives the assistance he needs to learn, and to learn how to best support his Individualized Education Program (IEP). Joseph is not present as he is not yet 14 years of age. The school’s ARD committee consists of his regular classroom Math and English teachers (these are Joseph’s lowest scores according to our FIE report, see below, and the areas where he has the most behavior issues; these teachers will be responsible for implementing many of the IEP accommodations), his Principal (the campus leader, concerned with ensuring the coordination and cooperation between regular teachers and Special Education service providers, and who is knowledgeable about the general curriculum and service options), the Middle School Special Education Teacher assigned to Joseph (who will work with Joseph’s regular teachers to provide ongoing support and some testing accommodations, and who is qualified to provide specifically designated instruction for pupils with disabilities), the District Special Education Director (the Supervising LSSP who is tasked with ensuring compliance with all laws, and providing critical procedural support and guidance to the team), and the Campus Diagnostician (an LSSP Intern who will counsel and see Joseph on a regular basis if it is determined he is eligible for ongoing Special Education services, and who will be directly responsible for oversight and management of the IEP).

How will Joseph’s current academic and behavioral levels best be determined?

The Campus Diagnostician, under the guidance of our Special Education Director, will prepare a Full and Individual Evaluation (FIE) Determination of Disability and Educational Need report for Joseph as part of our Response to Intervention (RTI) program.

The FIE report includes the Reason for Referral, in Joseph’s case including the facts that he qualified for special education in his former school district, where his disability fell under the “emotional disturbance” IDEA category, and that he has always been educated in “regular” classrooms, but is prone to brief, disruptive outbursts in class and has had trouble getting along with his teachers and classmates. It will also include the fact that Joseph has difficulty paying attention in class and does not sit still during tests and quizzes, often distracting his classmates while they are taking their tests.

The FIE report also includes the Intervention Results, in this case recounting what was done at Joseph's previous school, including the facts that he was receiving inclusion support in math and reading classes, received consultation services from the Special Education teacher for 10 minutes each day, and that he received testing accommodations.

The FIE report will include Joseph's academic progress data in the Evaluation of Educational Performance Levels. This section details his academic performance, including basic reading skills, reading fluency, and reading comprehension levels, as well as his mathematical calculation skills and mathematics knowledge and reasoning skills. This section will also include his latest standardized test scores.

The FIE report has multiple subsections under the heading of Intellectual and Adaptive Behavior addressing Joseph's Intellectual Behavior, Adaptive Behavior, Sociological Area, Physical and Motor Abilities, Language and Communication Status, Emotional and Behavioral Status, and any Assistive Technologies used or needed.

Finally, the FIE contains a Summary and Conclusions section summing up all the data and presenting the data-driven Recommendations for Interventions. It is this section in particular that will guide the ARD committee regarding accommodations and intervention strategies if the ARD committee determines Joseph is indeed eligible for Special Education services in our school. According to District policy, this section ends with a Disability Statement addressing the Commissioner's Rules Guidance document from the Texas Education Agency (TEA), which states that a learning disability must not be due to a lack of instruction in the area of reading or math, and determination of the presence of a learning disability must be made through the use of "a variety of assessment tools and strategies". The Assurances statement that "...the multidisciplinary team assures that the testing, evaluation materials and procedures used for the purposes of this evaluation were selected and administered so as to be non-discriminatory, both racially and culturally", precedes the signatures of both the Campus Diagnostician who prepared the FIE and the supervising Special Education Director.

How will the ARD committee determine whether Joseph qualifies for special education services? What factors go into making this determination? How will the committee select the related services for which Joseph will be eligible?

It is the discretion of the ARD committee to consider the data-based findings of the FIE and make the final determination regarding Joseph's eligibility for Special Education services based on whether Joseph has a disability as defined by TEA guidelines and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, reauthorized in 2004 as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act or IDEIA), including whether he needs Special Education and related services. Once the ARD committee has determined Joseph is eligible for Special Education services, they will implement an IEP for him. The FIE will guide the committee in making IEP recommendations for the related services for which Joseph is eligible. Joseph's IEP will mirror the major sections of the FIE and will include at least three basic components; Evaluation, Curriculum, and Placement, which are typically extrapolated into seven components: Present Level of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance, Measurable Annual Goals, Report of Progress, Services Based on Peer-Reviewed Research, Consideration for Participation in General Education, Description of Services, and at least by the time Joseph reaches 14 years of age, Transition Services.

The ARD committee makes determinations regarding related services, and in the case of reappraisal of current Special Education qualified students, whether any additions or

modifications to the Special Education related services are needed to enable the student to meet the measurable annual goals set out in his IEP and to participate as appropriate in the general curriculum. The IEP goals and objectives relate to meeting the needs that result from the student's disability in order to enable the student to be involved in and progress within the general curriculum, or to participate in appropriate activities. The goals and objectives also relate to meeting each of the other educational needs that may result from a student's disability. When selecting services to assist Joseph, the ARD committee knows that the school is required to provide services that will allow him to progress academically, but that the school is not required to provide services that maximize his potential, as was determined in *Board of Education v. Rowley* (1982).

Based on what you know of Joseph's background, what classroom accommodations would you recommend for him? Do you feel that he will need assessment accommodations? What assessment accommodations do you suggest?

Based on Joseph's background and consultation with my local Special Education support staff, assistive technologies are not needed as sufficient technologies exist in the regular classroom to enable Joseph to learn.

I would recommend classroom accommodations for Joseph including his being placed in the smallest size math and reading classes available. I would recommend that his teachers minimize distractions in the classroom and allow for preferential seating. His teachers must provide non-verbal cues in order to get Joseph back on task, and always provide positive feedback and reinforcement to Joseph when he does a good job in order to foster positive teacher-student relationships. It is important to provide breaks for Joseph when he begins to get off task frequently, for example, by sending him on an errand, further demonstrating trust and fostering relationships. Joseph would also benefit from counseling support to provide greater awareness of his emotions, and to help him implement coping skills including relaxation techniques. This will allow him to concentrate better in the classroom and to improve his peer interactions, which also have academic implications.

Joseph will need testing accommodations to improve the odds of a successful academic outcome for him, and to minimize his negative effects on his classmates. Logical assessment accommodations would include allowing him extra time to complete tests, and testing him in a small setting. The extra time would help compensate for his current lack of attentiveness, and the smaller setting would minimize his tendency to be distracted by or to distract others. I am basing my decisions on Joseph's IEP curriculum modifications, as TEA guidelines require that ARD committees make assessment accommodation decisions by using the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) curriculum as documented in each student's IEP.